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The Securitization of International Peacebuilding

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Abstract:

After the often-proclaimed ‘death’ of the ontologies of liberal peacebuilding, its associated ideas seem to increasingly discursively translate into a security framework. This can be read as an attempt of the main agents of international peacebuilding to ensure the survival of their approaches, institutions and infrastructures through a new framing of the concept. At the same time, this new framing of peace-related ideas has come to redefine ‘peace’ as ‘security’, however not necessarily for the intervened upon, but instead for its own agents and agenda-setters. Against this background, this chapter investigates the agents of securitised peacebuilding and argues that the question ‘Whose peace?’ (Pugh et al, 2008) can increasingly be read as ‘Whose security?’. In that sense, the chapter suggests that peace has come to represent a concern regarding the security of the dominant actors in the international system. The chapter thus asks: a) who has the power to frame peace as security, b) how are these agents reframing peacebuilding and c) what does the merging of the peacebuilding and securitisation agenda mean for the ownership of peace, both locally and globally.

Introduction

‘State failure’, ‘state fragility’, ‘instability’ and similar words in this semantic group seem to increasingly have come to characterise the language of recent peace-related interventions. International players (such as the European Union, the United Nations, International Financial Institutions) have, at least in discursive terms, not given up on their ambitions to intervene in the name of peace and peacebuilding. Much in contrast, recent interventions seem to take place in a more robust and decisive manner. Examples are numerous, including recent debates around the intervention in Libya, contested ambitions in Syria, the role of the United States and Western Europe in Ukraine, and so forth. However, what becomes obvious

in this context is the discursive reconfiguration of peacebuilding to include security-related aspects. Indeed, the implementation of peacebuilding through security-centred languages and policies points to a larger image of political networking, during the course of which two semantic fields are combined in one frame. In this chapter, I argue that this framing facilitates the survival of liberal peacebuilding, which has recently been seen as undergoing a deep crisis. This is not to draw a strawman of ‘liberal peacebuilding’, which is a concept hard to grasp in practice, but instead to problematise its discursive framing as a legitimate policy of intervention as promoted by its securitisation.

Against this background, this chapter raises the question as to why the discursive reframing of ‘peacebuilding for peace’ towards a framing of ‘peace through security’, or even ‘security over peace’ is happening, and which political networks and agendas can be seen as linked to this semantic shift. I argue that this shift casts light on practices of survival on the part of the most powerful agents and institutions in the field of peacebuilding. The chapter therefore first investigates the death of the notion and policies of ‘liberal peacebuilding,’ before outlining emerging techniques of survival through its securitisation, both in discursive and material terms. A brief analysis of this emerging semantic security-as-peace is framed in terms of ‘whose security’ is at stake as well as which power inequalities are reproduced in this frame. This will help understand practices of securitisation, which the author recognises in the cases of intervention in both Bosnia-Herzegovina and Cyprus. Through empirical illustrations from both post-conflict cases, this chapter attempts to understand a discursive shift in the peacebuilding field in its early stages and links it to the political interests and agendas at stake. It raises the question of which actors peace and security are being constructed for, and what this means for the quality of interventions on behalf of peace and security.

The death of liberal peacebuilding and its critique

Peacebuilding, as a western and highly structured model of dealing with conflict, was at its peak in the 1990s. It can be considered a comprehensive approach to dealing with conflict, in that it facilitates and engineers change not only in the political, but also the social and economic spheres of society, mainly through the involvement of civil society actors (Burton and Dukes, 1999: 144). In this context, in 1992, Boutros-Ghali’s ‘Agenda for Peace’ defined the need “to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace

in order to avoid a relapse into conflict” (1992). On this basis, peacebuilding has increasingly been referred to as ‘liberal peacebuilding’, in its attempts to promote peace through tools of democratisation as well as its assumption that the peace being promoted is universally applicable and valid (cf. Howell and Pearce, 2001: 23). The liberal peace is often implemented through the use of civil society actors who have become key agents in the delivery of peacebuilding in various ways (cf. Kappler, 2014).

The liberal peace has been said to be in major crisis, or even already dead due to the plethora of criticism voiced against it. In this context, Duffield (2005) has suggested that liberal peacebuilding is a form of bio-politics and colonialism rather than being driven by a concern for the common good. Easterly (2006) provides a critique against the tendencies of the west to impose its agenda, while Richmond refers to the liberal peace as ‘virtual peace’, which lacks meaning for its recipient societies (2006: 309). It has also been argued that local manifestations of resistance are creating an increasing challenge for the liberal peace (Kappler and Richmond, 2011). As a result, it is unable to survive through the use of top-down power, but its survival is dependent on its hybridisation with local practices (Mac Ginty, 2011). To conclude from these approaches, liberal peacebuilding is forced to take a localised shape which it may not have promoted in the first place. Such discussions have been particularly prevalent in the case of Kosovo, where peacebuilding ambitions have partly been co-opted locally and local elites have been said to have derailed the ‘original’ plan of powerful peacebuilding elites (Franks and Richmond, 2008).

These critiques certainly reflect a trend in the policy world, too, where increasing manifestations of resistance against peacebuilding, including social movements and the rise of new actors such as China as a peacebuilding actor, seem to threaten the mission and impact of the liberal peace. It also represents a threat to those actors who have invested in and hold a stake in the liberal peace. It affects international organisations, policy-makers, NGO personnel all of whom have invested massive resources in liberal peacebuilding. In Bosnia-Herzegovina alone, the Carnegie Commission has estimated that, before 2001, “NATO peacekeeping and humanitarian aid efforts cost \$53 billion” (United Nations, 2001). Kuroda (not dated) reports that, according to the Commission, the seven major interventions in the 1990s (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Somalia, Rwanda, Haiti, the Persian Gulf, Cambodia, and El Salvador) cost the international community a total of \$200 billion. Against the background of such major investments, the actors funding and implementing such missions are unlikely to give up on the notion of liberal peacebuilding without trying to save the mission. Indeed, in

the policy world, liberal peacebuilding remains a key tool of intervention despite its shortcomings. It almost seems as if (civil) societies have become ‘trapped in the liberal peace’, as Marchetti and Tocci (2015) suggest in their chapter title. In that sense, the continuity of established approaches has remained prevalent over the search for alternative responses to the critique, or even death of, liberal peacebuilding, as its critics put forward.

Similarly, a number of academics have continued to consider the liberal peace as a necessary measure to bring peace and development (cf. Uvin, 2002). In line with a much more positive view on peace-related engagement, academics have also argued that, for instance, critiques against liberal peacebuilding have been exaggerated or only justified to a limited extent (Paris, 2010). This has certainly encountered strong resonance in the policy-world as well. Strauss-Kahn, then managing director of the International Monetary Fund, for instance, stated that “[p]eace is a necessary precondition for trade, sustained economic growth, and prosperity” (Strauss-Kahn, 2009). Indeed, investigating the overall approaches of international players such as the European Union, there does not seem to be a major policy shift as a result of the critiques of the last decade – a glance at the progress reports on Bosnia-Herzegovina, for instance, does not suggest a strong transformation of the EU’s peacebuilding approach and instead suggests a high degree of continuity of this approach over time.

Given that liberal peacebuilding has been defended, implemented and legitimised for decades, the critiques, or even its death, would be destructive to both policy-actors as well as thinkers who have invested in it and have a stake in it. The maintenance of the discourse of peacebuilding can instead be said to impact upon the survival of major policy actors and institutions. As a result, in the following section, I will argue that the agents of liberal peacebuilding are currently ensuring the survival of the project through an attempt to securitise it discursively.

Framing peacebuilding as security: survival through securitisation

This chapter suggests that the re-orientation of liberal peacebuilding can be accessed through an analysis of the ways in which policy actors frame it in close proximity to security concerns. Entman argues that to “frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item

described” (1993: 52). He adds that “[f]rames highlight some bits of information about an item that is the subject of communication, thereby elevating them in salience” (Entman, 1993: 53). In that sense, framing involves the ambition to connect between events and issues in order to promote a particular narrative or interpretation of it (Entman, 2004: 5). Framing thus enhances “the salience of an interpretation and evaluation of particular aspects of reality” (Entman, 2004: 26).

Framing, since Entman’s work, has gained increasing prominence as an approach to understanding media representations of a wide range of issues, including the wars in Iraq and their consequences (Entman, 2004; Garyantes and Murphy, 2010). It is, however, equally useful to analyse the extent to which peacebuilding has been framed as a security-relevant action in both academia and policy practice. I argue that the framing of peace as security has managed to stabilise the discourse and application of peacebuilding, and ensured its survival in an age where it has come under attack, both from the sites it operates in as well as academic debates. Therefore, the survival of the concept of peace(building) in an age in which it appears outdated (or even ‘dead’) has been made possible by its securitised framing. Securitisation is therefore, according to Balzacq, a matter of power and a

sustained strategic practice aimed at convincing a target audience to accept, based on what it knows about the world, the claim that a specific development (oral threat or event) is threatening enough to deserve an immediate policy to alleviate it (Balzacq, 2005: 173).

If we consider the practice of securitisation essentially as a practice of framing, then the securitisation of peacebuilding becomes an act during the course of which problem definitions and evaluations are highlighted in particular ways in order to suggest particular responses to such problems – often in the form of more robust intervention as a response to perceived threats. This survival mechanism of peacebuilding is therefore dependent on its framing as security, and the policy action following from this discursive process. Questions that arise through a framing analysis of liberal peacebuilding thus include: Who frames? Who is framed as a threat? To whom? To which political end?

The observation of an increasing securitisation of peacebuilding is not entirely new. Newman (2010) has suggested earlier on that we can currently clearly witness this tendency. He argues, on the one hand, that “[v]iewing conflict, weak statehood and underdevelopment as a threat to Western interests has brought much-needed resources, aid and capacity-building to

conflict-prone countries in the form of international assistance” (Newman, 2010: 306). On the other hand, he suggests that such an approach “tends to externalize, demonize and contain problems in the developing - ‘other’ – world” (ibid.). In that sense, the securitisation of peacebuilding has led to the pathologisation of weak and failed states (Newman, 2010: 307) and has increased the use of top-down (rather than bottom-up) measures of international engagement (Newman, 2010: 317). Newman’s argument is indeed in line with Castaneda (2009) who suggests that security has increasingly become the driver for peace-related engagement, which can be considered one of the reasons for the failure of peacebuilding in local and national contexts. Richmond observes that prevailing conceptions of both peace and security can be seen as emerging from the period between 1945 and 1990 (Richmond, 2015: 177-8), in terms of both discourses used and the threats perceived. Peace and security, as they are currently discussed, can therefore be considered as situated in the framework of power constellations of the Cold War. It comes therefore as no surprise that in contemporary conflicts, such as Ukraine, the commonly used rhetoric is one of Cold-War securitisation rather than a search for alternative and/or new mechanisms of resolution. The NATO Review magazine, for instance, has recently connected “[t]ransatlantic energy security and the Ukraine-crisis” (NATO Review magazine, not dated) and Motyl (2015) highlights the extent to which Ukraine is key to the security of Europe as a whole. The dominant framing seems to emphasise the necessity for de-escalation in Ukraine as a mechanism to create security in Europe, rather than facilitating peace in Ukraine. Peace thus becomes a by-product of security, but not its ultimate goal.

Indeed, as becomes evident in the policy sphere, there is an increasing connection between peace- and security-related events and institutions in a variety of contexts. It is therefore no coincidence that the United Nations Security Council “has the primary responsibility for international peace and security” (United Nations, 2015), and other institutions have followed suit in terms of linking their peacebuilding activities to a security framing.

The frame: Investigating the peace-security nexus

Concepts such as security and conflict are neither pre-social nor neutral, but part of a field of discourses that can only be understood when their (social) context is taken into consideration (Campbell, 1998: 5). In that vein, a framing analysis only makes sense when the wider socio-political and economic context in which particular frames emerge is taken into consideration.

A look at the discursive field of peacebuilding is therefore revealing of its increasing securitisation in the current political climate.

First, we can observe the ways in which the political economy of peacebuilding is underpinned by a semantic framing of peace-as-security. Interestingly, in the policy world, we can witness an emerging discourse which calls for the need for *more* governance in the global public space as a result of the lack of peace *and* security (UK policy-maker and international diplomat, policy conference, 04/11/2014' emphasis by the author). After having witnessed a number of policy debates around peace and security in the United Kingdom, I have realised an almost consensual notion of the need "to tackle problems early" (Senior DFID officer, policy conference, 04/11/2014). This suggests, that, overall, there is a tendency to use the peace-security nexus as an entry point for a more proactive (read: interventionist) approach. The combination of peace and security intelligence indeed leads to the strengthening of resources entering into combined conflict-security-oriented missions. NATO, for instance, has launched a "Science for Peace and Security Programme", which aims to pool resources between the organisation and neighbouring countries. The programme's attention to

contemporary security challenges, including terrorism, defence against chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) agents, cyber defence, energy security and environmental concerns, as well as human and social aspects of security, such as the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (UNSCR 1325) (NATO, 2015)

suggests a particular focus on issues conventionally associated with security, while at the same time semantically privileging peace in terms of the wording of the programme. Similarly, the Africa-EU Partnership published a Roadmap in 2014, stating the need "to ensure a peaceful, safe, secure environment, contributing to human security and reducing fragility, foster political stability and effective governance, and to enable sustainable and inclusive growth" (Africa-EU Partnership, 2015). This reflects the interconnection between the political economy of peacebuilding in terms of the resources that are pooled into such programmes as a result of their securitisation on the one hand, and its semantic framing on the other hand.

In fact, in semantic terms, there is a plethora of examples confirming this trend focusing on the security, and, more specifically, the security of the west. To quote but a few frames used in this context: The *Fund for Peace*, based in Washington, famously produces the annual

‘Fragile States Index’ (formerly ‘Failed State Index’). The Institute for Economics and Peace publishes a ‘Global Terrorism Index’. In a similar vein, the Global Policy Forum (2012) reports that the “International Peace Operations Association (IPOA), whose members are primarily PMSCs, hosted a “Haiti Summit” in Florida for corporations to discuss post-earthquake contracting opportunities”. In this context, it is also interesting to note that the organisation has meanwhile been rebranded as *The International Stability Operations Association*. DFID refers to its peacebuilding work in the context of its work in fragile states (DFID, 2005: 5). What these examples reflect is the extent to which peace is increasingly being securitised and broadened to include issues such as failed or failing states, terrorism or natural disasters. ‘Tackling instability’ becomes the key word guiding peace operations. Such labels are then used to discursively create a notion of ‘threat’ to peace, while linking it to the necessity of (foreign) intervention to tackle these issues.

Therefore, and secondly in our investigation of the global political power relations underpinning this framing, Richmond (2015) suggests that peace and security have become ‘mono-ontologies’, representing the power of the global north/west. Following this point, we can argue that the framing of peace as security reflects the power of the global north/west to legitimise intervention on a global scale through the creation of threats – to peace. In this vein, Kaplan’s book entitled “The Coming Anarchy” is an illustration of an academic discourse which problematizes insecurity and ascribes it to conflict-torn non-western countries (Kaplan, 2001). The lack of peace is thus viewed as a result of insecurities in the global south, thus, perhaps unintentionally, creating an almost orientalist binary between the civilised west and the dangerous ‘other’ in need of external support.

Thirdly, in practical terms, through a rather critical lens and conducted via policy-field analysis, Castaneda (2009) shows how security has thus become an intrinsic part of peacebuilding in Sierra Leone, though this has primarily ended up stabilising the state, rather than problematizing its underlying assumptions. Interestingly enough, while questioning the concept of ‘stabilisation’ as such, Mac Ginty (2012: 27) suggests that stabilisation is always a matter of control and “normalizes the role of the military and aligned security agencies into peacebuilding.” In that respect, the language of stabilisation is a language which aims to maintain the status quo, which privileges certain actors over others, rather than opening a space for thinking about alternatives. In this case, peacebuilding has prioritised stabilisation over an investigation of the root causes of conflict, risking to potentially further cement underlying issues or even militarise ‘peacebuilding.’ Such observations encourage further

critical investigation of the framing of security as a peace-related mechanism, in order to understand the underlying political assumptions and agendas.

However, this is not to argue that security always and necessarily equals stabilisation. Indeed, a continuing state of instability can even be interpreted as beneficial for the (income) security of certain actors, as Chabal and Daloz (1999) illustrate in their referral to the political value of disorder as a resource. Yet, in general terms, in line with Mac Ginty (2012), we can argue that the overall tendency of securitisation has been one which favours stability over disorder – not least as the status quo structures of liberal peacebuilding have been created by powerful institutions who do not necessarily have an interest in disrupting the structures they had created themselves. Stability has thus come to signify the cementing of the contemporary world order in favour of the more powerful institutions. Although not focussing on a system of global power asymmetries in that very same sense, Ikenberry and Kupchan (1990) do provide an analysis of the ways in which hegemonic structures are a matter of socialisation. Against this background, the deeply-engrained policy –focus on stabilisation can indeed be viewed as a result of a wider political socialisation into an assumption that the current world order (framed as ‘stability’) is best maintained through a focus on ‘security’. Of course, this then raises the question of whose security is at stake.

Problematizing the frame: Whose security?

It becomes important to take into account that, according to Rumelili (2015), security is always a matter of identity construction. The process of securitisation thus constitutes not only the identity of the ‘other’ (the threat), but also of the ‘self’ (the one to be protected). This is, to a certain extent, reminiscent of colonial relationships, which consisted of a process of ‘othering’ through the representation of the ‘other’ as fixed and unchangeable to serve “the interests of the idealized ‘self’” (Brown, 1993: 662). In a context of peace-related intervention, such binarisations between ‘self’ and ‘other’ in turn lead to a conceptualisation of the latter as a threat to the security of the self. Security and peace as such are thus not only matters of concern *within* the society that is intervened upon, but also represent a relational concern for the relationship between intervener and intervened upon. This in turn has to be considered in the light of its possible policy-implications. What does it mean for the ways in which security policies are being constructed? Can the securitisation of peace be read as a particular framing of the relationship between self and other?

If we take a critical look at the frames used to legitimise intervention, often intended for security whilst framed as peace-related, we need to ask not only what frames are being used, but also for whom and for which political purpose. Mainly from a feminist perspective, it has been suggested that the production of knowledge is always a political undertaking (Sylvester, 2002: 275). This raises the question of ‘whose security’ is at stake in political terms, that is, on behalf of whom a framing is developed and used. Such an analysis points us towards a system of global inequalities (such as gender and the north-south divide), which is in turn reproduced in the framing of peacebuilding as well.

Interestingly enough, discussions around the nature of peacebuilding and security can be said to have a gender component. I can give an illustration from a high-profile conference I attended in 2014 on issues related to conflict and security. Populated with a mixture of well-established academics and policy-makers alike, less than a third of the speakers were female. This confirms evidence from some wider studies, particularly on the marginalisation of women from academia and science more generally (cf. Isbell et al., 2012; Jones et al., 2014). Hence, if we take for granted the assumption that the ways in which knowledge is constructed has an impact upon the ‘real world’, then we need to reflect on the implications of marginalising women from a central academic discourse (cf. Sjoberg, 2009). In that sense, security is perhaps more susceptible to this practice than peace, as the former has long been a field populated more by male than by female scholars. The logical follow-on question to the securitisation of peacebuilding can therefore be the question to what extent the discursive transformation of the field results in a, perhaps inadvertent, further marginalisation of women from that field and what this means for the ontology of peace and peacebuilding. Charlesworth (2008: 249) points out that, while the assumption that women are more prone to peace than men has faced criticism in the sphere of feminist academic thought, there is nonetheless the notion of the ‘peaceable woman’ deeply engrained in international institutions. If this is indeed the case, the securitisation of the discourse of peacebuilding represents an attempt on behalf of institutions to impose a traditionally male frame upon what has long been considered a more female frame of peace – at least in the policy world.

Moving beyond the gendered notion of framing, in looking at the ways in which the term ‘security’ is used in policy-conferences as highlighted above, it becomes quickly evident that we are talking about the security of a particular part of the world – in orientalist terms, the security of the ‘west.’ Bilgin (2004), for instance, suggests that in security discourses about

the Middle East, a multiplicity of voices have been left out, while highlighting the need to situate discourses in particular world views rather than taking them for granted.

This raises the question as to *who* frames and defines the peace-security agenda, and with what political interests in mind. The fact that questions of instability, conflict and state failure tend to be discussed in the global north, which claims to be affected least by those issues, brings up another query: *whose* peace and security are these discussions concerned with? If there was a concern about the security of the cases in discussions, would these debates not be held in these countries and at least include country representatives?

At the policy conference outlined above, almost all speakers were from the west. This may well be a logistical issue, given the event took place in the United Kingdom. However, it reflects an interesting dynamic during the course of which western elites speak on behalf of the global south, which they aim to secure / securitise. All cases of conflict and insecurity discussed were located in the global south, albeit with almost no representatives from those countries. Yet this is by no means a new discovery. Indeed, as early as 1991, Ayoob (1991) published an article in which he questions the applicability of security concepts as devised in the west to Third World countries. Boas (2000) has very clearly and critically addressed this issue in his article on 'security communities.' He suggests that there is a tendency to focus on a state-centric, elite-driven perspective on security instead of security for the people on the ground (Boas, 2000). In a similar vein, Rubin (2006) suggests that the US intervention in Afghanistan is not necessarily accurately framed through a focus of peace- or state-building in the country, but rather through a lens of security for the US themselves. In that sense, we need to look at the agents of peace-security frames, in terms of who shapes them and to what end.

Investigating the peace-security nexus from such a perspective points to the political function of discourse and framing. The framing of peacebuilding as security results in a discussion about the security of countries actively involved in peacebuilding (historically speaking, a rather westernised concept, too) rather than peace for the sake of those intervened upon. In that sense, intervention is legitimised through its benefits for the intervener, as increased security for the latter. More specifically, the definitions of security tend to be framed stereotypically by a white, male, academic elite and their associated networks (cf. Latour, 2005). This also means that the recipient societies are stripped of their agency to frame their peace-and security-related concerns on their own terms.

In this respect, Castaneda argues that “the focus on security limits the political imagination and discussions for alternatives” (Castaneda, 2009: 249). If we agree with this statement, we can claim that the securitisation of peace has, rather than broadened options for empowerment more generally, narrowed its scope of action. In that sense, the securitisation of peace does not necessarily empower the population in which peace is to be built (as suggested by the body of reconciliation and community activism literatures (cf. Lederach, 1997; Rigby, 2001; Schaap, 2005), but instead empowers the interveners at the expense of the respective target society. This is made possible by the discursive framing of the ‘other’ as a threat to the interveners, rather than the more peace-specific framing of conflict between two groups of ‘others’. Trends of securitisation have instead created a distance between the interveners and their target societies (see also Noreen, 2004).

Framing peace as security – examples from Cyprus and Bosnia-Herzegovina

Let us thus turn to two examples to illustrate the extent to which the securitisation of peacebuilding has impacted upon policy practice.

First, I would like to take a look at the so-called ‘Occupy-the buffer-zone-movement’ (alias ‘bufferer movement’) in Cyprus, an off-spring of the Occupy Wall Street Movement that started in Nicosia, the capital of Cyprus, in 2011. The movement used the buffer-zone, that is, the UN-controlled zone which divides the city into the Turkish North and the Greek South, as a space of resistance against the UN-dominated peace process. The latter had led to the division of the city, and the island as a whole, in the first place. The activists of the movement first arranged weekly meetings in the buffer zone until some of them started camping permanently in the zone to voice their discontent with the politics of a divided island. Interestingly, the activists were from both the north and the south, and their clear goal was to call for the unification of the island. One of their slogans was “from UN-controlled to UNCONTROLLED.”

This movement is a highly relevant example of the securitisation of peacebuilding by international actors who are active in Cyprus, most notably the United Nations (leading the peacekeeping mission) and the European Union. While one would perhaps have expected a certain degree of enthusiasm for this peace movement on the part of the international actors present on the island, it came as a surprise that, in reality, international actors watched the movement with suspicion. As one of the key activists reported, the movement soon received

an eviction letter from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) (personal interview, Nicosia, 11 July 2014). This was coupled with a visit from both the UNDP and the European Commission, who tried to reduce the space of the campers in the buffer zone and the movement as a whole (ibid.). Part of the rhetoric of the international players was security-related, referring to issues of terrorism and drugs (ibid.). Members of the movement even suggested that this securitised language of drug-abuse was deliberately planted so the movement could be evicted. As the activist explained, the movement had at the same time started an initiative, during the course of which peace activists were playing volleyball across the divide in its narrowest spot, as a way of showing their agency to overcome the division. However, again, the UN stopped this initiative. To quote the activist: “they can’t cope with natives wanting peace” and “they are scared to lose authority over peace” (personal interview, Nicosia, 11 July 2014). This is certainly not to glorify this movement, but to point to an interesting dynamic: it seems as if the language of the movement, which had the question of unification and peace at its very heart, was sacrificed by some international actors who in turn securitised the issue of the movement.

Rather than pointing to the peace-related core of the movement, they brought up the issues of ‘drugs’ and ‘terrorism’ as a way of minimising the agency of this movement. This in turn created a whole new set of relationships in the discourse. Instead of addressing the division of the island and the international complicity in this division, the securitisation of the ‘bufferer-movement’ served as a way to frame the movement as a security threat to the wider island communities - some of which were suspicious of the movement anyway (confidential source, personal interview, Nicosia, 09 July 2014). This framing thus allowed for policy-action against the movement and considerably damaged its energy. Although some of the activists are still gathering today, the movement seems to have lost its initial momentum. In that respect, we can argue that the securitisation of the movement had served to remove its agency and to subvert its initial peace-related agenda. We can also observe that international agents quickly took over the framing of the issue as a security-related aspect. Surprisingly, the actors framed as threats to security were the activists themselves who had initially set out to work on behalf of peace. What we can therefore see is that the framing has assumed the function of labelling security as linked to peace, but in an adversarial way. The international actors involved in the case prioritised ‘security’ in their definition over the type of peace the activists wanted to promote. The audience of this framing were the activists themselves on the one hand, but the wider island on the other hand. In a way, one could argue that the

framing of the activists as a threat to the security of Nicosia as a whole (in terms of drugs and so forth) was a tool to undermine the movement and thus maintain the status quo in which international (not local) actors hold authority over the definition and design of peace. The security frame has thus become a tool of maintaining the stability of power relations in favour of international and at the expense of local actors.

A similar process could be observed during the 2014 protests in Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH). The protests developed from a medium-sized movement of factory-workers in Tuzla to an almost country-wide movement/uprising against corruption, unemployment and for more social justice (see Plenum gradjana i gradjanki Sarajeva, 2014). From the movement, a numbers of citizens' plenums arose, in order to discuss political issues in a bottom-up manner. Those plenums met regularly (some still are) to discuss and decide on political issues and communicate with the formal political sphere. The movement has clearly sent a wider message to the west, not least in terms of the ability of people to devise their own peace process and define its socio-political underpinnings themselves (cf. Jansen, 2014). It is therefore interesting to note how quickly the movement was securitised, both by local and international elites as well as the international media. The Economist, for instance, wrote: "By February 8th the protests had spread and violence had broken out. Several government offices, including the presidential building in Sarajevo, were set on fire." (The Economist, 2014). The BBC headline on the protests read "Bosnia-Herzegovina protests break out in violence" (BBC, 2014). It is certainly true that, in the initial stages of the movement, some violence did happen. However, this was not the main message being sent from the movement, given that the vast majority of protesters were peaceful and small-scale incidents of violence were quickly contained.

Yet, rather than being considered platforms for the construction of a truly locally owned process, the protests and associated plenums were viewed with suspicion at best. Not only did the western media view the movement with caution, but this is also true for international elites engaged in the Bosnian context. Valentin Inzko, the High Representative of BiH, nominated by the International Peace Implementation Council (PIC), even called for the deployment of EU-led troops as a potential response to the unrest. Inzko traced the protests to a less active role of the Office of the High Representative (OHR, 2014) and thus established a link between the protests, the associated security issues and the limited role of the

international community. Similar statements could be read from Wolfgang Petritsch, former High Representative in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Petritsch, strikingly enough, associated the protests with the help- and hopelessness of the Bosnian people and thus called for “the EU to squarely set the reform agenda” (Petritsch, 2014: 116-7). To quote directly, Petritsch said that

[t]he EU High Representative for External and Security Affairs along with the Commission and the newly appointed Commissioner, Austrian “Gio” Hahn, whose envelope includes the European Neighbourhood Policy plus enlargement, will have to put the European Union’s West Balkan policy on a “political” and more assertive footing (Petritsch, 2014: 118).

What this example shows is a particular securitised framing of the protests, which could equally have been read as the reclaiming of ownership of the peace process by Bosnians themselves. Instead, international actors opted for a framing of the protests as illustrative of the need for more European Union involvement in BiH – which would certainly be a much more contested issue in local discourses (cf. Kappler, 2014). Intervention thus becomes a result of a securitized frame – not least against the background that international intervention has long been seen as a rather controversial and questionable undertaking in BiH (cf. Chandler, 1999; Belloni, 2007; Richmond and Franks, 2009). Very similarly to the case of Cyprus, it was mainly international actors, supported by national elites, who had an interest in maintaining this framing in which local protesters were presented as a threat to the security of the country as a whole. The audience of this framing transcended the local and national, even extending to a more global public to which the framers could ascertain the continuing need for intervention in order to protect Bosnian citizens from themselves. Locally owned peace yet again became subordinate to security. Here, this can easily be read as the stabilisation of engrained and asymmetrical power relations, in which, again, local communities hold very little power. This is not only true due to the internal political structures in BiH, but is also a result of the considerable degree of power that the Office of the High Representative and the European Union hold in the country.

What this case reflects is the extent to which the security frame can be used to legitimise foreign intervention as well as acting as a survival tool for the peacebuilding project as such. Against the background of the multiple forms of criticism and resistance against peacebuilding, a concern framed as security-relevant can thus act as a response to such critiques and assert intervention in more powerful ways. It equally takes away agency from

the subjects of intervention by framing them in a context of threats rather than possibility. Both the movement in Nicosia and the protests in different Bosnian cities are illustrative of the tendency of international peacebuilding to remain suspicious of local agency and a certain degree of reluctance to endorse agendas which have not been developed in their discursive framing of international peacebuilding.

Conclusion: Implications for peacebuilding

This chapter has cast light on the political context and strategic value of the framing of peacebuilding in close relation to security concerns. In this framing, peace is not necessarily or always seen as a logical extension of security (and vice versa), but instead sometimes even as an obstacle to it. In terms of authorship, the semantic field of securitised peacebuilding is indeed predominantly occupied and discursively shaped by powerful actors who are also often male elites from the west. This context certainly privileges a particular type of narrative and frame, that is, one which is in line with the interests of those elites as far as wider power structures are concerned. It almost seems as if security frames have entered the peacebuilding field to dominate it and divert attention from the root causes of violence, and towards a focus on combating its symptoms. Using the examples of local activism in BiH and Cyprus, the chapter has highlighted the wider political context in which such politically-laden frames emerge, as well as the functions the latter fulfil.

What these examples reflect is the extent to which the securitisation of peacebuilding prevents the interveners from addressing the root causes of resistance, conflict or unrest, and instead focuses attention on the legitimisation and justification of intervention. In that sense, peace becomes an instrument for powerful policy-makers and elites rather than a process that is expected to take place at local level, which should result from local agency. Local ownership is then only a desirable bi-product if it complies with those larger policy agendas (cf. Kappler and Lemay-Hebert, 2015). The illustrations from BiH and Cyprus in fact reflect the hesitation of intervening powers to leave the discursive and material design of peacebuilding to local actors. A securitised frame instead serves to weaken their authority in the negotiation of the content of peace(-building) and instead secures the survival of the currently most powerful agents in the international system. In Cyprus, international organisations framed the ‘bufferers’ as a security threat as a means to end the movement and undermine their reputation in the wider local communities. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, the

framing of the protest movement as a social threat sought to weaken the movement's authority in the field of peace and social justice, both of which were (and are) at the core of their mission. In that sense, it becomes obvious that the increasing securitisation of (liberal) peacebuilding is not a natural given, but a political strategy implicated in the perpetuation of wider political power structures. It gives the authority to act on behalf of peace to already powerful actors – that is, those who are in the position to publicly frame deviations from the model as a threat – and at the same time limits the extent to which alternative agencies can challenge this model. Since who can argue against security?

This of course raises wider questions, primarily about the ethics of security understandings and practices (Browning and MacDonald, 2011). It also raises questions about the framing of different identities – that is, the identity of the intervener and the society intervened upon. In this context, Fierke suggests that dialogue can serve as a vehicle for the reconstruction of identities, thereby potentially transforming discourses and actions (Fierke, 2007: 79 and 84). This is certainly not an easy task: how can the identity of a framed 'other' as a threat be transformed into an identity which is at eye level with the interveners? How can the securitisation of peacebuilding be resisted locally? Perhaps through a de-securitisation of peace-related discourses? Again, this does not seem like an easy task, bearing in mind that Hansen has pointed to the political difficulties in de-securitising discourses, which also results in the dissolution of the friend-enemy dichotomy (Hansen, 2012). At the same time, it is important that the power relations at play in the (re-)framing of peacebuilding and its recent increasing securitisation be made obvious. If they are not, we risk naturalising a discourse which puts security at the expense of ethics and content, rather than hand in hand with it. It also risks legitimising power structures which would otherwise be open to debate and political challenge, as the examples of BiH and Cyprus show.

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